

# arcade express

## THE BI-WEEKLY ELECTRONIC GAMES NEWSLETTER

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### CREAT AMERICAN HEROES EARN TRIPS TO HOLLYWOOD

Six winners of the Activision Greatest American Hero Contest, each with two guests, went to Hollywood to meet the stars of the tv series. The winners earned the trip by scoring big on "StarMasters" in the Activision summer promotion.

In Hollywood, the six "StarMaster" champions participated in a special filming of "The Createst American Hero" with Robert Culp, William Katt and Connie Sellecca, stars of the ABC series. However, legal technicalities (the gamers aren't members of the actor's union) may keep the episode from being aired. But Activision rose to the occasion by giving each of the winners an extra prize -- a VCS and video cassette recording of the private filming.

Winners in six age groups were George Gibson, 7, of Bensalem, Pa.; Wayne Judkins, 8, of Pounding Mill, Va.; Christian Burns, 11, from Maryville, Tn.; Mark Canady, 12, of Anchorage, Ak.; Todd Jacobsen, 14, of Everett, Ma., and Edward Semrad, 33, of Waukesha, Wi. (Ed's name may seem familiar, since he's the current champ of Asteroids on the Atari VCS, according to scores compiled by Electronic Games and Arcade Express.) Good gaming, Arcaders!

### ATARI TO PRODUCE DONKEY KONG FOR HOME COMPUTER MARKET

Atari has obtained an exclusive worldwide license to develop Nintendo's "Donkey Kong" and "Donkey Kong Junior" for the Atari family of home computers. The games, which have already been licensed by Coleco for home videogames and stand-alone units, are expected to be among the top selling titles in 1983 for the Atari 400/800 computers, according to Keith Schaefer, VP of Sales for Atari's Home Computer Division. Schaefer described the games as "outstanding additions to our unique game software library..." John Cavalier, President of the Home Computer Division, said, "These new titles are further evidence of Atari's commitment to bring the most popular videogames to owners of Atari home computers."

### TIMELORD LAUNCHES ODYSSEY ATTACK

Odyssey<sup>2</sup> owners should be on the alert; an awesome invasion is on the way. "Attack of the TimeLord" is the new Challenger Series game for the Odyssey. This fast-moving action game has 265 levels, millions of strategic combinations, and four different kinds of weapons to attack the hapless gamer simultaneously. It even talks to you if you play it through the Odyssey Voice module.

"Attack of the Timelord" should be available for holiday shoppers. Keep watching the skies for the disk-shaped ships; this is the most fearful threat to Odyssey owners since "UFO"!

### THUMB POWER FEATURES A HANDFUL OF FUN

Nowadays when someone says he has time on his hands, he may only mean one of the hand-helds manufactured by Masudaya of Japan for distribution by Thumb Power. Dubbed "Thumb Games", the palm-sized Play & Time pocket watches sell for \$35-\$50. Eight of the mini-marvels contain two games, each with beginning and expert play levels. Two of them, "Samurai vs. Ninja" and "Jungle Adventure/Woodman" are advanced models featuring alternating displays, for better graphics in this form

# MTI ENTERS GAMING WITH 12 TITLES IN MULTIPLE FORMATS

Magnetic Tape International (MTI) will introduce 12 games at CES in Las Vegas. The new titles, all original programs, will be released in cassette, cartridge and floppy disk configurations, to be compatible with the Atari 400/800 computers, Commodore's VIC-20, and the Atari VCS. The products will be advertised under the ZimMag brand, and titles include "Station ZimMag", "WabaIoo", "Nineball", "Inca Sun", "Space Mines" and "Cat Nap". Russell Greene, President of the new venture, promises an extensive ad campaign coupled with enthusiastic merchandising and consumer promotions. "We see an enormous market for high quality and selectively merchandised product in the games business," says Greene.

# TRONIX EXPANDS LINE; INTRODUCES GAME FOR ATARI 400/800 COMPUTERS

Tronix Publishing Company, the firm that recently entered the market with a line of games for the VIC-20, is expanding their list of titles with "Kid Grid" for the Atari 400/800 computers. "Kid Grid" is a maze-chase game that gets faster as the player gets better. John Reese, Tronix' President, says, "When we developed 'Kid Grid', we tried to build in a factor which is missing in most other video games, and that's a game with personality." Reese went on to predict, "once you play 'Kid Grid', you'll be hooked."

# COMPUTER CAMP COMBINES RECREATION WITH HANDS-ON EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Summer camp will be a unique experience for the youngsters at National Computer Camp next summer. Campers aged 9 through 18 can enjoy traditional summer activities such as swimming and tennis, while getting small group instruction in mini- and micro-computers. The camp is for kids with or without previous computer experience, and has locations in Connecticut, Georgia and Missouri. This is the sixth year of the original computer camp directed by Dr. Michael Zabinski from Fairfield University. For information contact Dr. Zabinski at 203-795-9667, or write National Computer Camp, P. O. Box 585, Orange, Connecticut 06477.

# SEGA/GREMLIN CHANGES NAME TO SEGA ELECTRONICS, INC.

David Rosen, Chief Exec of Sega Enterprises, has announced a new moniker for its arcade and video-game subsidiary. Sega's arcade game manufacturer in San Diego is Sega Electronics, Inc. Mr. Rosen explained that the company feels recognition of the Sega name is increasingly important as the company moves deeper into the entertainment industry. They felt the Sega/Gremlin combined name was awkward and confusing. Therefore they'll drop the Gremlin name on games and in advertising, and use the Sega Electronics handle on Sega's coin-operated videogame business.

# ILLOWSKY GOES IT ALONE

Funtastic, based in Drexel Hill, Pa., is the name of the new software publishing outfit recently founded by Dan Illowsky. To date, Illowsky is best known as the creator of two highly popular games for the Apple II computer, "Snack Attack" and "County Fair". Funtastic will, at least at first, concentrate on marketing Illowsky's own creations. Both "Snack Attack" and "County Fair" are expected to be available from the new source by mid-1983.

DataMost, Illowsky's previous publisher, has reportedly withdrawn a new game by the same author, "Space Kadet", from distribution, and it, too, may end up as a Funtastic release.

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# PUT THE SCALES OF JUSTICE IN PROPER BALANCE

"Murder, Anyone?" is the first interactive videodisc game, produced for the Pioneer and Magnavox laser videodisc system by Cincinnati-based Vidmax. The electronic detective contest takes advantage of the ability of the laserdisc to store thousands of frames of information to create a suspense story in which the viewer takes the part of the investigator. A total of 16 branchings makes it possible for the player/detective to explore the physical evidence and question specific witnesses in the case of the murder of millionaire industrialist Derrick Reardon.

MysteryDisc uses the talents of nine actors and actresses, mostly culled from Broadway and Off-Broadway, to stage the fictional events surrounding the murder of Mr. Reardon which detective Stew Cavanaugh must unravel. Cavanaugh must crack one of the suspects' alibis and bring in the killer.

# NEW HOMES FOR DATA AGE AND IMACIC

Thriving videogame business is causing expansion and relocations for two companies. Data Age has relocated its Saratoga, Ca. offices to new corporate headquarters in Campbell, to accomodate the tremendous growth that company expects in the next few years, according to Martin Meeker, President of Data Age. The larger quarters will house all corporate, product development, sales and marketing operations, and the staff which is expected to double by the end of 1982.

Meanwhile, Imagic has broken ground for a new manufacturing and distribution center in Hayward, Ca., in a move which Bill Crubb, President of Imagic, says, "...will allow us to increase production capabilities to keep pace with the rapidly growing demand for our products..."

# COIN-OP FAVORITES INSPIRE COLECO MINI-ARCADES

Coleco's line of mini-arcades have been so popular that the company plans to introduce three new titles early in 1983. The additions are based on popular hits from the arcades, following the proven formula that Coleco has successfully adhered to thus far. "Ms. Pac-Man" gives maze-chase fans an exciting round of fun, and "Donkey Kong, Jr." is a different type of climbing game. Last, but certainly not least, is "Zaxxon", a very ambitious undertaking for the mini-arcade line. Coleco expects the three new units to be in shipment in Spring of 1983, and will show them for the first time at CES in Las Vegas.

# VENTURE VISION COES TO SPACE

Venture Vision, a new outfit in Texas, is looking at the stars for inspiration for a new line of VCS-compatible games. The first release, "Rescue Terra I", designed by Dan Oliver (who programmed "Space Caverns" when he was with Games by Apollo) is in shipment for holiday shoppers. This multi-level-screen game features space pirates, asteroids, robot interceptors, and force fields.

VentureVision will introduce two new titles at CES, both described as space games. A new programmer, Robert Weatherby, is working on the CES releases with Dan Oliver. The company promises a line of high-quality action games.

# IMACIC ADDS TITLES TO INTELLIVISION LINE

Imagic's product line has just been expanded to include four new Intellivision cartridges. The good news for people who own the Mattel Master Component is that they can anticipate playing "Demon Attack", "Atlantis", "Beauty and The Beast" and "Microsurgeon". "Demon Attack", winner of the 1982 Arcade Award for Videogame of the Year, has been a popular hit since its introduction to VCS-owners early in 1982. "Atlantis" currently ranks as one of the top videogames in the country. "Beauty and the Beast" and "Microsurgeon" are both new games with graphics especially designed for the Intellivision system.

# DATA AGE DRAWS ON POPULAR CULTURE HITS FOR GAME INSPIRATION

Data Age will introduce three new cartridges for the Atari VCS at the Winter Consumer Electronic Show in Las Vegas, in January 1983. They will be shipped during the first quarter of the year, together with the previously announced rock 'n roll game, "Journey Escape".

Data Age has continued to examine popular culture for inspiration for their games. "Bermuda Triangle" takes the gamer aboard a mini-sub on the ocean's floor, to locate and loot a mysterious lost city. In "Frankenstein's Monster", arcaders gather stones from Dr. Frankenstein's dungeon and carry them to the tower, to build a barrier around the monster before he's completed. Finally, pit your agent against enemy spies, pursued and threatened, as he tries to recover top secret military documents and other prizes. Data Age has picked "Secret Agent" as a tentative title for this thriller based in the Swiss Alps.

# COIN-OP COMPANY CREATES FIRST EDUCATIONAL GAME

Play-for-pay fans can expect to get smarter as well as being entertained, when they solve Exidy's "Hardhat". The coin-op calls for logic and organizational skills, and develops the gamer's ability to manipulate space, plan ahead, and create new goals with changing conditions. The arcader controls a carpenter pursued on screen by hammers and whirlwinds. He moves through a grid of collapsing scaffolding, then gathers letters randomly appearing on the edges of the playfield, to spell "Exidy" on the first level, and "Hardhat" on the second. It remains to be seen whether coin-op fans will become quiz-whiz-kids by playing the game, but at least they should learn how to spell a little better.

# CBS PLANS NEW COMPUTER GAMES

K-Byte games will be much in evidence in the CBS display at CES, according to Scot McFarland, General Manager of the firm acquired earlier this year by CBS Software. K-Byte, now operating to develop software for computers under the CBS Software logo, will show games for the Atari 400/800 computers, as well as "Krazy Antics" and "K-Star Patrol" in adaptations for the VIC-20 computer. K-Byte is also working on game adaptations for the Color Computer and the TI-99.

Meanwhile, Allen Selby, spokesman for CBS Software, promises new titles for the Atari computers, including "Blue Print", a translation of the Bally coin-op. Another game under the working title "Caveman" calls for the arcader to move through a maze of tunnels, avoiding alien attacks, in one- or two-player mode. CBS Software also has plans to move into the educational game field, with a special math game involving time trials.

# NEW FACES

Denis Hickey has recently joined Starpath Corporation, as Vice President of Finance and Administration. Hickey most recently served Dynabyte Corp., but will now oversee all aspects of financial planning for Starpath...John C. von Leesen is the new Vice President for Marketing and New Business Development for D. Cottlieb & Co. Mr. von Leesen formerly was an officer with Six Flags Corporation, in charge of that company's chain of electronic game centers. He'll now be responsible for development of overall strategy, planning and short and long-term marketing activities for D. Cottlieb, a division of Columbia Pictures Industries...Harold Frankel is the new Director of Marketing for Entex Industries. Frankel formerly has had 25 years of toy business experience, at firms such as Kohner, Ideal and Coleco...Entex has appointed Nick Underhill as Vice President and Director of International Marketing. Underhill was formerly the Director of Marketing for this manufacturer of hand-held electronic games.

**PITFALL TOPS** Activision's VCS adventure cartridge, "Pitfall", continues to lead all other videogames in popularity in the monthly **READER POLL** reader's poll conducted by Electronic Games. It was the second straight month in which "Pitfall" copped the top spot. "Star Raiders", the most popular computer game software program, and "Donkey Kong", the best-liked coin-op machine, also maintained their positions as category leaders.

ColecoVision cartridges, which appeared on the videogame list last month, improved their showing this time. Not only did "Donkey Kong" soar from 13th to 4th, but "Zaxxon" and "Lady Bug" cracked the standings for the first time. Coleco also scored well with the VCS-compatible version of the Nintendo climbing classic, which landed in 10th place.

"Night Stalker", a maze shoot-out, is far and away the most popular game for the Intellivision, third overall. Maintaining long-time favorite status are Mattel's "Major League Baseball" and "Astrosmash".

While "Star Raiders" took its customary first-place position among computer games, Muse Software's "Castle Wolfenstein" rebounded to finish a very strong second to the first-person space piloting and combat game. Strongest of the newcomers is "Mouskattack", an Atari 400/800 program by Sierra On-Line.

The tremendous acceptance which home arcaders have given the various home editions of "Donkey Kong" has apparently sparked a revival for the play-for-pay device in the game parlors. Mario's adventures earned the top slot this month followed closely by "Tron" and "Ms. Pac-Man". Taito's "Jungle Hunt", originally released as "Jungle King", was the only new title to crack the coin-op list this month.

#### MOST POPULAR VIDEOGAME CARTRIDGES:

<u>Position</u>		<u>GAME</u>	<u>SYSTEM</u>	<u>MANUFACTURER</u>
<u>This Month</u>	<u>Last Month</u>			
# 1	# 1	Pitfall	Atari VCS	Activision
2	3	Defender	Atari VCS	Atari
3	7	Night Stalker	Intellivision	Mattel
4	13	Donkey Kong	ColecoVision	Coleco
5	2	Berzerk	Atari VCS	Atari
6	9	Adventure	Atari VCS	Atari
7	10	Frogger	Atari VCS	Parker Bros.
8	4	Major League Baseball	Intellivision	Mattel
9	8	StarMaster	Atari VCS	Activision
10	6	Donkey Kong	Atari VCS	Coleco
11	5	Demon Attack	Atari VCS	Imagic
12	-	Zaxxon	ColecoVision	Coleco
13	-	Incredible Wizard	Astrocade	Astrocade
14	-	Astrosmash	Intellivision	Mattel
15	-	Lady Bug	ColecoVision	Coleco

#### MOST POPULAR COMPUTER GAMES:

1	1	Star Raiders	Atari 400/800	Atari
2	7	Castle Wolfenstein	Apple II	Muse
3	2	Pac-Man	Atari 400/800	Atari
4	3	Jawbreaker	Atari 400/800	Sierra On-Line
5	4	Missile Command	Atari 400/800	Atari
6	5	Centipede	Atari 400/800	Atari
7	-	Mouskattack	Atari 400/800	Sierra On-Line
8	6	Wizardry	Apple II	Sir-Tech
9	-	Preppie	Most Systems	Scot Adams Int'l.
10	-	Crush, Crumble, Chomp	Apple II, Atari 400/800	Automated Simulations

(see coin-op list, continued on page 8)



# THE HOTSEAT

## Reviews of New Products

RATINGS: 10 Pure gold and about as good as a game could be. A rare rating.  
 9 An outstanding, state-of-the-art game.  
 8 A very good to excellent game.  
 7 A good game.  
 6 Better than average, but maybe not for everyone.  
 5 An average game that does what it promises.  
 1-4 The item has serious flaws.

KEY: The information which heads each review follows the same simple format.

First comes the name of the item, then its classification and, if it is a home arcade software program, the system or systems with which it is compatible. Finally, there's the manufacturer's name.

### MARAUDER/Videogame Cartridge (for Atari VCS)/Tigervision

The On-Line-Tigervision connection is rapidly becoming one of the most fruitful relationships in the entire electronic gaming industry. Here's yet another strong VCS cartridge based on a popular computer game originally distributed by Sierra On-Line. The arcader must dash through the rooms of an alien held complex, zapping the guards and searching for the installation's power center. The most intriguing feature is that the arcader has an overview of each room as the on-screen character enters it, yet can only see the enemy robots when they are actually in the line-of-sight of the on-screen character. This endows "Marauder" with a much higher suspense quotient than other maze-shoot-outs, calling forth a lot of quick thinking from the gamer. Rating: 8

### LOVERS OR STRANGERS/Computer Game (for Apple II)/Alpine Software

Want to know if you're compatible with that exciting new person whom you just met? Experience is the only way to tell for sure, but you and the apple of your eye can have a good time in the meanwhile with this program created by a pair of psychiatrists. After each half of the couple to be tested enters a name, the computer begins to present a series of questions. Each time one flashes onto the screen, each participant must select one of five multiple choice answers for himself, and guess at the answer the other individual will supply. There are more questions than needed for any single run of the questionnaire, so trying the test a second time will put the players face to face with a partially new and randomly selected set of queries. A clutch of graphs and summaries is developed by the computer after the humans complete the question process that rate the compatibility of each half of the couple in a variety of areas.

This is an exceptionally novel idea, one which may find quite a bit of popularity as an ice-breaker at parties and so forth. Too bad Stanley Crane, who performed the actual game design and programming duties, didn't fancy things up with some arresting audio-visual effects that would've made "Lovers or Strangers" less formal and more fun. Still, not a bad job at all on this change-of-pace title. Rating: 7

### POINT-MASTER/Joystick Controller (for VCS, 400/800, VIC-20)/Disc Washer

The record care people are venturing into the world of videogaming accessories with this inexpensive device which features a top-mounted action

button. Although the Point-Master does not quite equal the creme de la creme of gourmet sticks, it is perhaps the best value for the price, and makes an excellent replacement for a worn-out Atari-manufactured control unit for those who prefer the button on the shaft instead of the base.

Response on the Point-Master is excellent. Those who favor a light touch at the control will be especially pleased by how little effort the player must expend to change the direction of the on-screen character. A real value.

Rating: 9

#### THE MASK OF THE SUN/Computer Game (for Apple II)/Ultrasoft

This adventure, a quest for a magic relic, is greatly enlivened by a breakthrough graphics treatment. We've all seen illustrated adventures by now, but what about ones that are very nearly animated? In "The Mask of the Sun" players don't pop from location to location without pause. Instead, every move is displayed on the screen as a rapidly executed series of full-color drawings flashed on the monitor in quick succession. In other words, when you're cruising down a jungle road in a jeep, you actually see the road roll past as the computer carries out your last instruction. "The Mask of the Sun" is crammed with little goodies like an idol that comes to life right on the screen and then attacks.

And with all the graphics excitement, Ultrasoft hasn't forgotten to craft an absorbing and challenging adventure. "The Mask of the Sun" is strictly upper crust from start to finish. Rating: 9

#### E.T./Videogame Cartridge (for Atari VCS)/Atari

You've cried at the movie; now try the videogame. Some critics will look at E.T.'s relatively simple graphics and straight forward play mechanics and dismiss it out of hand as a crude quickie to cash in on the craze for the Steven Spielberg film. While it is hard to deny this cartridge's obvious shortcomings, "E.T." should perhaps be judged as an attempt to produce an action-tinged adventure game for the younger home arcader. As such, it succeeds fairly well, though Atari's designer could easily have taken more pains. The concept is fairly simple and directly derived from the hit movie: E.T. roams around the multi-screen playfield, looking for the missing parts of his telephone and, unluckily, falling into various pits. Rating: 6

#### AZTEC/Computer Game (for Apple II)/Data Most

This is the best blend of arcade and adventure gaming action since Muse's "Castle Wolfenstein". You're an archeologist-explorer in the mold of Indiana Jones, who must reach the temple ruins for a fabulous idol. The ruins are patrolled by ten different monsters, ranging from the merely annoying to the positively terrifying.

In "Aztec", the player moves from room to room in the labyrinth, jumping chasms and climbing up and down stairs as necessary. Hidden in chests and piles of debris are weapons, including a gun and bullets, a sharp machette, and even sticks of dynamite.

There are eight levels of difficulty, but even the easiest will be quite a test for the inexperienced. Player input is through the keyboard and though the control scheme is rational and logical, it will take most folks a few rounds at least to learn the ropes. One appreciated touch is that the computerist can choose whether to play the same maze again or have the machine generate a new one after each round of action is completed. "Aztec" is endlessly fascinating and a continual delight to play. Rating: 9

READER POLL  
CONTINUED

Below are listed the most popular coin-op videogames, continuing the reader poll results that started on page 5:

MOST POPULAR COIN-OP VIDEOGAMES:

<u>Position</u>		<u>GAME</u>	<u>MANUFACTURER</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>Last</u>		
<u>Month</u>	<u>Month</u>		
# 1	# 1	Donkey Kong	Nintendo
2	3	Tron	Midway
3	6	Ms. Pac-Man	Midway
4	8	Galaga	Midway
5	9	Robotron	Williams
6	5	Zaxxon	Sega
7	2	Dig-Dug	Atari
8	-	Jungle Hunt	Taito
9	4	Tempest	Atari
10	7	Pac-Man	Namco/Midway

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